Role of Social Media in Women Empowerment: A Sociological Study (With special reference to Ranchi Municipal Corporation)

2024

A synopsis submitted for Ph.D. admission
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I. State of the Art

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool that influences various aspects of society, including women's empowerment. In the context of Ranchi Municipal Corporation, this sociological study explores the evolving role of social media in advancing women's empowerment. As technology continues to reshape the way we communicate and access information, it is essential to understand the impact of social media on women's empowerment in a local context. This state-of-the-art review provides insights into the current literature and key themes surrounding this topic.

In recent years, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, profoundly impacting the way we communicate, share information, and connect with others. While its impact is pervasive across various domains, one area that has garnered increasing attention is its role in women's empowerment. This state-of-the-art review focuses on the influence of social media on women's empowerment, with a special emphasis on the Ranchi Municipal Corporation in India.

Women's empowerment, as a multifaceted concept, encompasses economic, social, and political dimensions. Social media platforms offer a unique environment where women can access information, engage in discussions, and advocate for their rights. Various theoretical frameworks underpin this study, including the Agenda-Setting Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Feminist Theory. These frameworks help in understanding how social media can empower women by shaping public discourse, fostering social connections, and challenging traditional gender norms.

Social media platforms provide women with access to a vast pool of information, which is essential for their empowerment. Women in Ranchi, like elsewhere, can use platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to gain knowledge on a range of topics, from health and education to entrepreneurship and legal rights. Information dissemination through these platforms can break down traditional barriers, equipping women with the resources they need to make informed decisions about their lives.

Social Capital Theory suggests that social relationships and networks are valuable assets in achieving personal and community goals. Social media allows women in Ranchi to build and maintain these relationships, both locally and globally. Online communities and forums provide platforms for women to connect, share experiences, and seek support. This social capital can be harnessed for collective action, furthering their empowerment in the local context.

Social media serves as a space for women to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes. Through blogging, activism, and storytelling, women can voice their concerns, question societal expectations, and foster conversations about gender equality. This platform not only amplifies their voices but also challenges the status quo, encouraging positive change within the Ranchi Municipal Corporation and beyond.

Women's participation in politics is critical for their empowerment. Social media has played a significant role in fostering political engagement among women in Ranchi. Platforms like WhatsApp and Twitter are used to mobilize women for political rallies, advocacy campaigns, and participation in local governance. This has contributed to a more inclusive and participatory political landscape in the region.

Financial autonomy plays a pivotal role in the overall empowerment of women. Social media platforms have opened up avenues for women in Ranchi to explore entrepreneurship, showcase their skills, and market their products or services. Initiatives like 'Digital India' have facilitated access to online markets, creating opportunities for financial independence and economic self-sufficiency.

Challenges and Concerns:

While the role of social media in women's empowerment is significant and multifaceted, it is not without its fair share of challenges and concerns. In the context of Ranchi Municipal Corporation, as in many other regions, several issues and potential drawbacks need to be addressed. Understanding these challenges is vital for devising effective strategies to harness the positive aspects of social media while mitigating its negative effects. I delve into some of the most prominent challenges and concerns below:

Online Harassment and Cyber bullying:

One of the most pressing concerns for women using social media is the prevalence of online harassment and cyber bullying. Women often face derogatory comments, threats, and hate speech, which can have a chilling effect on their online

presence and limit their freedom of expression. This harassment not only impedes their ability to participate in discussions but can also have psychological and emotional repercussions, making social media a hostile space for some.

Privacy and Data Security:

Women's personal information and data are often at risk on social media platforms. Privacy breaches and data security issues can lead to the exposure of sensitive information, putting women in vulnerable positions. This can also deter some women from engaging with social media platforms, especially those who have concerns about the safety and security of their personal information.

Digital Divide:

Access to social media is not uniform, and the digital divide remains a substantial challenge in many regions, including Ranchi. Women from marginalized communities may have limited access to the internet or devices, reducing their opportunities to harness the benefits of social media for empowerment. Addressing this divide is crucial for ensuring that all women have equal access to these empowering tools.

Fake News and Misinformation:

Social media platforms are notorious for their role in the spread of fake news and misinformation. Women can be particularly vulnerable to believing and propagating false information, which can have real-world consequences. Misinformation can impact women's decision-making and perceptions, undermining their empowerment in the process.

Social Media Addiction:

Social media addiction can negatively impact women's time management and productivity. Excessive use of these platforms can divert attention from real-life responsibilities, affecting their empowerment in areas such as education, work, and family. Additionally, the constant exposure to curate, idealized online lives can lead to feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem.

Online Trolling and Stalking:

In addition to harassment, online trolling and stalking are significant concerns for women on social media. Persistent online stalking and intrusive behaviors can create a hostile and unsafe environment, leading some women to disengage from these platforms entirely.

Reinforcement of Stereotypes:

While social media can challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes, it can also reinforce them. In some cases, women are encouraged to conform to certain beauty ideals or prescribed roles, which can be disempowering and regressive. This can be seen in influencer culture, where women are often expected to meet specific beauty standards.

Confirmation Bias and Filter Bubbles:

The algorithms that power social media platforms tend to show users content that aligns with their existing beliefs and interests. This can lead to confirmation bias, where women are exposed primarily to information that reaffirms their existing views.

Dependence on Online Validation:

Social media can sometimes create a dependence on online validation through likes, comments, and shares. Women may develop a need for external approval, which can negatively affect their self-esteem and self-worth, especially if they receive negative feedback or experience social media backlash.

Selective Self-Presentation:

The pressure to present an idealized version of oneself on social media can lead to selective self-presentation. Women may feel compelled to hide aspects of their lives or identities that don't conform to societal expectations, leading to inauthentic online personas.

Loss of Offline Social Interactions:

The significant time spent on social media can lead to a reduction in face-to-face interactions and social isolation. Building genuine social capital through in-person relationships is essential for empowerment, and the overuse of social media can hinder these connections.

Regulation and Censorship:

Social media platforms often grapple with the issue of content regulation. While it is important to prevent the spread of harmful or abusive content, excessive regulation can also limit freedom of expression and may disproportionately affect women and marginalized groups.

Addressing these challenges and concerns is essential to fully harness the potential of social media for women's empowerment in the context of Ranchi Municipal Corporation and beyond. Policymakers, social media companies, and civil society organizations must work collaboratively to create a safe and inclusive online

environment that promotes women's empowerment while mitigating the negative consequences associated with these platforms. Empowering women in the digital age is a complex and evolving task, but one that holds immense potential for societal progress and gender equality.

Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand, is a diverse and culturally rich region. It is home to a significant population of women who are actively engaging with social media. Understanding the specific context of Ranchi is crucial in assessing how social media influences women's empowerment in this locale. It allows for a nuanced analysis of the region's unique challenges and opportunities.

The role of social media in women's empowerment is an evolving field of study with profound implications for local contexts like Ranchi Municipal Corporation. Social media provides women with access to information, a platform to build social capital, a means to challenge gender norms, and opportunities for political engagement and economic growth. However, it also brings forth concerns related to online harassment and privacy.

The present study underscores the need for further research and a comprehensive study that examines the impact of social media on women's empowerment in Ranchi, accounting for its unique socio-cultural and political landscape. As social media continues to shape our society, understanding its role in advancing women's empowerment remains a pertinent and evolving area of study, offering significant potential for societal transformation.

II. Review of the Literature

The literature review for the present study examines existing research on the influence of social media on women's empowerment. It explores the various ways in which social media platforms have been used to empower women, addressing both the opportunities and challenges associated with this phenomenon. I have read several books, Research Journals, Articles etc. for the present study. The short summary of the some books, Research Journals, Articles etc. are mentioned below:-

Grishma Khobragade (2019) addresses the historical marginalization of women and explores strategies to address their identity and human rights concerns. It highlights the evolution of women's roles from ancient times to the present, emphasizing the need to empower the underprivileged. The book features twenty-two research papers covering topics such as the role of religion and policies, women's

nutrition, gender sensitization, education, working women in the unorganized sector, media, and NGOs in promoting empowerment, and more. It serves as a valuable reference for scholars in gender studies, rights of marginalized sections, and social sector development. The book aims to provide a comprehensive platform for academic and policy discussions, benefiting students, researchers, and academics, particularly those working on women's empowerment in their dissertations and theses.

Ewa Lechman (2021) In an age of pervasive information and communication technology (ICT), our world is witnessing a transformative wave with far-reaching implications. This book dives into this digital tide, with a particular emphasis on the role of social media in women's empowerment. It stands as a valuable addition to the growing body of literature, shedding light on how modern ICT, especially social media, influences women's economic and social empowerment, ultimately contributing to overall well-being. The book takes a deep dive into the realm of "empowering technologies," demonstrating how ICT, when harnessed effectively, becomes a catalyst for women's progress. It delves into theory and real-world evidence, offering comprehensive insights into how ICT serves as a pivotal driver for the social and economic development of women. This work places a special focus on the following key areas: the channels through which ICT impacts women's development, the role of ICT in bolstering women's active participation in formal labor markets, and tangible examples showcasing how ICT facilitates education, skill development, institutional growth, and more, all of which play a vital role in women's social and economic empowerment. Additionally, the book presents compelling case-based evidence on how ICT acts as a powerful agent in advancing women's equality. With a firm foundation in both theory and practical insights, this book serves as a crucial resource for understanding the dynamic intersection of social media, technology, and women's empowerment, offering a comprehensive view of the transformative potential of ICT in the lives of women.

Hend T. Alsudairy (2023) In this compelling edition, the intricate world of internet forums and their concealed participants is unveiled. It offers a detailed exploration of how these enigmatic activists, shrouded in anonymity, rise to prominence in the realm of print media. Their enduring impact and unwavering quest for reform are meticulously traced back to their clandestine online identities. This study delves deep into the dynamic landscape of social media within Saudi Arabia and establishes connections with the content found in official newspaper columns. It

delves into the fundamental question of whether Saudi women possess the space for free expression within their patriarchal society, examining the scope and consequences of such expression. A pivotal moment in this narrative occurred in 2004 with the introduction of Twitter in Saudi Arabia, swiftly becoming the preferred social media platform among Saudis, largely due to its character limit. This platform provided a sanctuary for the exchange of daring ideas and the promotion of reformist and moderate perspectives. Furthermore, this edition unveils the intriguing correlation between social media and the audacious subjects featured in newspapers, offering an in-depth exploration of the interplay between these two realms. It provides a unique perspective on the role of social media in catalyzing courageous discourse and facilitating transformative change in the Saudi Arabian context.

Kiran Prasad (2005), presents a thought-provoking exploration of the complex relationship between women and the media. This insightful collection of essays challenges conventional feminist perspectives and provides a critical examination of the media's portrayal of women. It delves into the ways in which media both empowers and disempowers women, touching upon topics such as body image, representation in advertising, and the impact of media on shaping societal norms and expectations. The book offers a diverse range of voices and viewpoints, encouraging readers to question and analyze the role of media in perpetuating or challenging gender stereotypes. It serves as a valuable resource for academics, researchers, and anyone interested in the intersection of gender, media, and feminism. "Women and Media: Challenging Feminist Discourse" opens the door to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between women and the media, making it a significant contribution to the field of gender studies.

Aruna Goel (2009) In this insightful work, Goel scrutinizes the various dimensions of women's empowerment and the challenges associated with achieving it. The book dissects the prevailing myths and realities surrounding women's empowerment, offering a critical examination of societal perceptions and the true progress made in this realm. Author navigates through issues such as economic independence, political representation, education, and social equality to assess the tangible advances made by women in different spheres. Through rigorous research and analysis, the book sheds light on the complexities of women's empowerment and highlights the persisting obstacles that hinder its realization. It serves as a valuable resource for those interested in gender studies, social development, and women's

rights, providing a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted journey toward women's empowerment.

Anamika Srivastava (2020) Author explores the contemporary landscape; media stands out as a powerful instrument for fostering development, both in urban and rural settings. However, a pressing challenge confronts society: the need to identify media channels that can effectively reach both urban and rural populations. Government authorities bear the responsibility of identifying and deploying these effective and accessible media to bolster the execution of programs and policies aimed at empowering women. The task extends beyond government institutions; it calls for a collaborative effort involving a range of professionals, including non-government organizations, media entities, community organizations, social groups, and researchers. Together, they must broaden the scope of communication, utilizing appropriate channels to advance the cause of women's empowerment. In the grand scheme of things, the media's role extends to broadcasting, newspaper publications, and advertising to promote development initiatives. To facilitate this, governments should actively encourage and provide training to workers within programs like Asha/Anganwadi and Self Help Groups. Such measures are pivotal in ensuring the promotion and upliftment of women in society.

Pradeep Mathur (1998) This insightful collection of articles delves into topics such as the portrayal of women in media, the impact of media on societal perceptions of gender, and the role of women both as media producers and consumers. It critically examines how media can reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and cultural norms, making it a vital resource for those interested in the intersections of gender, media, and society. The book serves as a reflection of its time, shedding light on the evolving role of women in the media industry and the changing narratives in media content.

Kadeswaran S, Brindha D, Jayaseelan, R (2020) This research delves into the intricate relationship between women and social media in the context of India. It addresses the disparity in internet usage between genders, with a lower percentage of women online compared to men, despite a global trend where female social media users often outnumber males. The study seeks to understand how social media influences and empowers women, offering them a platform for self-expression, education, support, and the sharing of their ideas. It recognizes the multifaceted roles that social media plays, from information dissemination to entrepreneurship, and how

it can challenge traditional gender norms, fostering a more equitable society. Through in-depth, qualitative interviews with 23 women from diverse backgrounds, this research aims to unravel the complex dynamics at play in women's engagement with social media and its implications for their empowerment, contributing to a deeper understanding of the evolving roles of women in the digital age. In summary, this research investigates the impact of social media on women's empowerment in India, where access to the internet varies between genders. By exploring the perspectives of women and their experiences in the digital realm, the study uncovers the opportunities and challenges posed by social media as a tool for gender equality and societal transformation.

Ananta Narayana, Tauffiqu Ahamad (2016), The imperative to combat all forms of discrimination against women extends to a broad spectrum of actors, encompassing governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and notably, the media. The profound influence of the media in disseminating knowledge, innovations, and news cannot be overstated, and in the modern world, it holds a pervasive presence in our lives, reaching almost every individual. It represents a formidable force that can be harnessed to advance the cause of women's economic empowerment. This raises pertinent questions about the potential of media efforts in this regard. What role does mass media play in shaping and reinforcing women's social roles? How can we leverage the media to promote gender equality and empower women economically? Furthermore, how can we enhance the visibility and impact of women in the decision-making processes within the media industry? This paper delves into an analysis of the potent and affirmative role that media can assume in advancing women's empowerment and fostering gender equality, highlighting the opportunities and challenges in this crucial endeavor.

Maurice Odine (2013) In the Middle East, limited press freedom has historically hindered access to vital information and analysis through traditional mass media. Drawing from the Arab Spring, it's clear that the right to information is crucial for political engagement and socio-economic development. Activists in the region, especially women, have turned to unconventional media like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to address discrimination and inequality that often went unaddressed in government-controlled media. These platforms have empowered Arab women to challenge societal disparities, particularly in education and professional opportunities.

This highlights the transformative role of digital media in reshaping gender dynamics in the Middle East.

Nieke Monika Kulsum (2018), In this research, the author explores the evolving digital landscape of Indonesia, a country known for its high level of internet usage and an increasing presence on social media platforms. Notably, women in Indonesia are taking the lead in digital engagement, particularly in politics. A 2016 survey highlighted the substantial number of internet users in the country, with over 132 million Indonesians online, out of a total population of 256 million. Women, in particular, have embraced the digital sphere, surpassing men in internet and social media usage. This trend has sparked a greater interest and understanding of Indonesia's political landscape among women, leading to their increased involvement in politics at various levels, supported by the government. The research is set to delve into this transformative shift using a qualitative approach, including interviews, literature analysis, and document review.

Geeta Kashyap (2014) Within this research, the author examines the evolving landscape of alternative media, a dynamic platform that has emerged as a catalyst for societal empowerment. It has provided women with a unique space for free expression and sharing of ideas, fostering a sense of empowerment and autonomy. In particular, this virtual sphere offers respite from real-world challenges such as eve-teasing, stalking, and harassment. The research also delves into the prevalence of private settings on social networking platforms, especially among Indian girls who often encounter stalking as a significant issue. These private settings offer a sanctuary within the digital realm, allowing girls to ward off unwanted attention and create a secure online environment. This phenomenon not only encourages greater female engagement with social media but also highlights the intricate interplay between the virtual world and the complexities of real-life experiences that alternative media allows girls to circumvent. The central focus of this research revolves around determining the extent to which alternative media genuinely empowers women, enabling them to share their thoughts without societal constraints, or if these platforms still impose limitations on their freedom of expression. Additionally, the research aims to explore how different gender groups, specifically girls and boys, employ and experience these private settings, offering insights into potential disparities in their usage patterns.

Nasreen Akhter, Farrukh Naheed (2014) In this research, the author addresses the critical issue of women's empowerment, particularly in underdeveloped nations where women often rely on male counterparts for various aspects of their lives. Education and societal training have long been recognized as powerful tools for women's empowerment, yet the role of media in this context cannot be underestimated. This study is dedicated to evaluating the media's contribution and identifying avenues for enhancing its impact on women's empowerment within the Pakistani context. The findings revealed a significant trend where many women either rarely or never engaged with media, but those who did found it to have a positive impact on their societal status. While media has played a vital role in raising awareness of women's issues and promoting social consciousness, it has shown limitations in fostering women's professional development and providing guidance on income generation and achieving equal societal standing.

Anuradha Choudhary (2019) In this research, the author highlights the disconnection between government policies aimed at women's empowerment and their practical implementation. Media emerges as a powerful tool to reshape society's perception of women by sharing inspiring stories and generating awareness. It plays a crucial role in addressing gender inequality, illiteracy, exploitation, and harassment, fostering positive change.

Sheweta Gaur (2018) This research paper delves into the pivotal role of media in women's empowerment, aiming to assess the status of women across various dimensions, including social, economic, and decision-making power. Following India's independence, the government introduced a plethora of initiatives and policies, accompanied by legal safeguards, to advance the cause of women's empowerment. While governments, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations bear significant responsibility for curbing discrimination against women, the role of mass media in this endeavor is equally substantial. Media's influence is profound, impacting the dissemination and interpretation of information, knowledge, innovation, and news, effectively becoming an integral part of our lives. The research predominantly draws from secondary data and observations, incorporating an extensive literature review on women's empowerment. As the paper concludes, it offers key recommendations for the media to enhance women's empowerment in India, highlighting the transformative potential of media in advancing gender equality and empowering women.

Saji Alfonsa, K.C. Chinnamma (2018) In this research, the transformative influence of social media on women's empowerment takes center stage. Social media platforms have given women a powerful voice, enabling them to tackle previously unspoken issues. These digital spaces have become a force for mobilizing attention and accountability in the realm of women's rights, challenging entrenched discrimination and stereotypes. Social media's impact is evident in its ability to bring women's rights issues to the forefront of public consciousness, spurring global activism and pushing policymakers to prioritize gender equality. Beyond communication, social media unites women across geographical boundaries, providing swift platforms for advocacy and activism. Hashtag movements have harnessed social media's potential to shine a spotlight on underreported women's rights issues, from gender-based violence to menstrual hygiene. This research delves into the multifaceted role of social media in empowering women, exploring its profound impact on women's rights, political agendas, gender sensitization, and the advancement of women in leadership and decision-making roles.

Amit Kumar Mandal (2022) The paper is structured into five sections, with the first section underscoring the growing significance of social media and its prominence in recent years. The second section delves into the essence and concept of women's empowerment, framing the discussion. The third section assesses how social media has impacted women's lives, effectively serving as a tool for empowerment. The fourth section grapples with the challenges and drawbacks that these social media platforms can pose, proposing necessary measures to mitigate these issues. Ultimately, the paper's last section concludes the theoretical insights drawn from this exploration.

Azad Pratap Singh (2017) This research underscores the pivotal role of mass media in the empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality. While governments, educational institutions, and NGOs have essential roles in combating discrimination against women, media's vast influence cannot be overlooked. It has the power to disseminate knowledge, innovations, and news, making it an integral part of our lives. This paper encourages us to explore how media can boost women's economic empowerment, reinforce their social roles, and enhance their visibility in decision-making processes within the media sector. It highlights the transformative potential of media in advancing gender equality.

V. Sinjitha and R. Jansi Rani (2022) This study, conducted in 2021-22, had a dual focus: to examine the socio-demographic characteristics of educated homemakers aged 34 to 54 and to understand the impact of social media on this group. Employing the adoptive structuration theory, the research aimed to enhance homemakers' technological capabilities, especially among those who rely on their spouses for financial support due to an inability to work independently. The study's findings revealed that 90% of the homemakers were well-versed in online commerce and social media, yet many faced challenges in utilizing these platforms to generate additional income due to their heavy domestic responsibilities. Nonetheless, the research shed light on valuable insights regarding technology adoption.

III. Problems to be investigated

In the present study several compelling research problems emerge. One fundamental issue to explore is the impact of social media on women's empowerment, assessing both its positive and negative influences within the context of Ranchi. The study aims to delve into measurable changes in women's economic, social, and political status attributed to their engagement with social media. Additionally, it's crucial to investigate the barriers that women may face when using social media as a tool for empowerment in Ranchi. The study seeks to understand these obstacles, which can encompass issues related to digital literacy, access, cultural norms, or online harassment. Understanding these challenges is essential for devising effective strategies to overcome them. Another avenue for exploration in the present study is the impact of government and social media policies on women's empowerment in the region. The study intends to investigate whether specific initiatives or regulations have contributed to or hindered women's empowerment within Ranchi. The study also encompasses an examination of the prevalence of gender-based violence and online harassment targeting women using social media in Ranchi. Understanding these challenges is vital in addressing them and creating a safer online environment for women. Exploring the role of social media in creating support networks and communities among women in Ranchi is another intriguing research problem. The study seeks to evaluate how these networks enhance women's empowerment, and the specific ways in which they do so. Additionally, the present study investigates how social media serves as a tool for skill development and entrepreneurship among women in Ranchi. The study aims to determine whether specific online resources or

platforms have been particularly effective in this regard. Political participation is another key area for investigation in the present study, assessing the extent to which women in Ranchi use social media for political engagement. The study seeks to investigate whether social media provides a platform for women to influence policy decisions or participate in political activities. The influence of cultural and societal norms in Ranchi on women's engagement with social media and their ability to use it for empowerment is also explored in the present study. The study aims to understand the role of these norms in shaping women's interactions with social media platforms and their potential for empowerment.

IV. Objective of the Investigation and Motivation

The objectives of an investigation and the motivation for a Ph.D. thesis in social science research are paramount as they guide the entire research process. Clearly defined objectives delineate the research's scope, helping researchers focus their efforts, gather relevant data, and ensure the study's rigor. The motivation for the thesis establishes its significance, demonstrating the contribution it will make to the existing body of knowledge and addressing real-world social issues. This combination of clear objectives and strong motivation not only ensures the academic merit of the research but also underscores its potential to inform and impact social policy, theory, and practice, making it a crucial foundation for successful and meaningful doctoral research in the social sciences. Following are the objectives of the present research:-

1. To assess the extent to which women in Ranchi Municipal Corporation utilize social media platforms for empowerment, including education, employment opportunities, and community participation.
2. To examine the impact of social media on the socio-economic status of women in Ranchi, with a focus on income generation, entrepreneurship, and financial independence.
3. To analyze the role of social media in enhancing women's political participation and activism within the context of the municipal corporation, investigating how it influences their engagement in local governance and decision-making processes.
4. To explore the challenges and opportunities that women encounter in their use of social media for empowerment, identifying barriers such as digital literacy, online harassment, and socio-cultural constraints.

V. Research Hypothesis

The formulation of research hypotheses is crucial in a Ph.D. thesis in social science research as they provide a structured framework for investigation. Hypotheses serve as testable propositions that guide the researcher's inquiries, enabling the systematic collection and analysis of data. They help in generating specific research questions, designing appropriate methodologies, and drawing meaningful conclusions. Furthermore, hypotheses contribute to the academic rigor of the study by making it clear what is being tested and allowing for the evaluation of empirical evidence. In the social sciences, where complex human behavior and interactions are studied, hypotheses offer a structured and methodical approach to explore, understand, and contribute to the field's theoretical and practical advancements. Following are the hypothesis for the present research:-

1. Women in Ranchi Municipal Corporation who actively engage with social media will have greater access to educational resources, job opportunities, and community involvement, leading to increased empowerment levels compared to those who do not use social media.
2. The use of social media among women in Ranchi is positively correlated with economic empowerment, as it contributes to income generation, entrepreneurship, and financial independence.
3. Women who are active on social media platforms within the Ranchi Municipal Corporation area are more likely to participate in local politics, advocate for women's rights, and influence municipal decision-making processes, compared to those who are not active on social media.
4. Challenges related to digital literacy, online harassment, and socio-cultural norms are significant barriers that hinder women's effective use of social media for empowerment in the context of Ranchi Municipal Corporation, potentially affecting the outcomes of their engagement.

VI. Research Design and Methodology

The research design and methodology are of paramount importance in a Ph.D. thesis in social science research, as they serve as the blueprint for the entire study. A well-structured and rigorous research design enables the researcher to systematically investigate complex social phenomena, ensuring the collection of relevant and reliable data. The methodology outlines the specific techniques and tools used for data

gathering, analysis, and interpretation, thereby providing the study with its scientific validity. Moreover, a robust research design and methodology facilitate the replication of the study by other researchers, contributing to the cumulative knowledge base in the field of social sciences and, ultimately, enhancing the credibility and impact of the Ph.D. thesis.

The scientific method and a descriptive research design are fundamental to the present study on the role of social media in women's empowerment within the Ranchi Municipal Corporation. The scientific method ensures that the research maintains a high degree of objectivity and validity. It guides in formulating hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions based on empirical evidence, rather than personal biases or opinions. This objectivity is especially crucial in social science research, where complex human behaviors and societal factors are at play. It helps ensure that the findings are reliable and credible.

The descriptive research design is equally vital for the present study as it enables a detailed and comprehensive account of the phenomenon under investigation. In this case, the study explores the nuanced relationship between social media and women's empowerment in a specific geographical context. A descriptive design allows for the collection of data on the extent of social media usage, the empowerment outcomes, and the challenges faced by women in Ranchi Municipal Corporation. This in-depth approach is well-suited to understanding the multifaceted aspects of the research topic. Moreover, it serves as a foundation for future research and policymaking, as the rich descriptive data can inform evidence-based decisions to empower women in similar urban settings.

By combining the scientific method with a descriptive research design, the present study ensures that the research is not only systematic and objective but also capable of providing a comprehensive and replicable account of the role of social media in women's empowerment within Ranchi Municipal Corporation. This approach enhances the quality and impact of the research, contributing to both academic knowledge and practical applications in the field of social sciences.

The incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in the present study on the role of social media in women's empowerment within the Ranchi Municipal Corporation is vital as it allows for a comprehensive and nuanced examination of this complex sociological phenomenon. Qualitative research, through methods like interviews and content analysis, enables an in-depth exploration of

individuals' experiences, perceptions, and the underlying social dynamics, providing valuable context and meaning to the quantitative data. Conversely, quantitative research, employing surveys or statistical analysis, offers the means to quantify patterns, trends, and the extent of social media's impact, enhancing generalizability and the ability to draw broader conclusions. By employing this mixed-methods approach, my study can provide a well-rounded and substantiated understanding of the multifaceted relationship between social media and women's empowerment, contributing to the richness and validity of your research findings.

Selection of field

Choosing Ranchi Municipal Corporation as my field area is significant because it provides a specific and well-defined geographic context for the present research on the role of social media in women's empowerment. This selection allows me to focus my research on a particular urban region, which can lead to more targeted and context-specific findings. It also enables me to investigate the local dynamics, challenges, and opportunities that women in Ranchi face concerning social media and empowerment, potentially yielding insights that can be directly applied to this specific community. By concentrating on Ranchi Municipal Corporation, I can develop research that is not only academically rigorous but also practically relevant for the local community, making my study particularly valuable in the field of sociological research and women's empowerment.

Ranchi, the thriving capital of the Indian state of Jharkhand, has evolved into the most populous city in the region. It bears historical significance as the epicenter of the Jharkhand movement, a pivotal movement advocating for the establishment of a separate state to cater to the tribal regions encompassing South Bihar, northern Orissa, western West Bengal, and the eastern territories of what we now recognize as Chhattisgarh. This vision was realized on the 15th of November 2000 when the state of Jharkhand was officially carved out, marked by the bifurcation of the Bihar divisions of Chota Nagpur and Santhal Parganas. According to the provisional reports of Census India in 2011, Ranchi boasted a population of 1,073,427, comprising 558,872 males and 514,555 females. Furthermore, the city, with its vibrant cultural tapestry and dynamic atmosphere, saw its urban/metropolitan population stand at 1,126,720, with 586,596 males and 540,124 females. Ranchi Municipal Corporation (RMC), a pivotal institution, was established on September 15, 1979, a momentous development brought to life through Government Notification No. 1406, which

merged the erstwhile Ranchi Municipality, Doranda Municipality, and Ranchi Doranda Joint Water Board. As the second Municipal Corporation of erstwhile Bihar and the first Corporation in the newly-formed state of Jharkhand, the RMC currently oversees 55 administrative Wards and administers an expansive jurisdiction encompassing an area of 175.12 square kilometers. It operates under the governance of the Jharkhand Municipal Act, 2011, although the devolution of powers and functions, as envisaged by the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (1992), remains a prolonged and unresolved challenge, as it does for many other Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). The RMC continues to navigate this evolving landscape in the realm of urban management and governance.

Sampling

For the present research study on the role of social media in women's empowerment within Ranchi Municipal Corporation, purposive sampling will be employed to select a representative sample of 200 respondents. This sampling technique allows for the deliberate and specific selection of participants based on the research objectives. The sample will be drawn from four distinct wards namely Ward-34 (Area of I.T.I. Hehal), 36 Area of Piska More), 4 (Area of Morabadi) and 10 (Lalpur) of Ranchi Municipal Corporation, with 50 respondents selected from each ward. This approach ensures a well-distributed and diverse representation of the urban population, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the research topic within the specific context of Ranchi. By employing purposive sampling, the study aims to capture a range of perspectives and experiences that can contribute to a nuanced understanding of the relationship between social media and women's empowerment in this urban setting.

VII. Sources of Data Collection

In the present study on the role of social media in women's empowerment within the Ranchi Municipal Corporation, a range of data collection sources will be employed. Primary data will be collected through structured interviews using interview schedules, facilitating direct and targeted inquiries into social media usage and its influence on women's empowerment. Focused group discussions will provide an interactive platform for participants to share their perspectives and experiences, fostering a rich dialogue on the research topic and yielding diverse qualitative insights. Furthermore, observation techniques will be utilized to systematically

document real-life behaviors and practices, shedding light on how women interact with social media, the content they engage with, and the outcomes of their online activities. Additionally, quasi-participant observation will allow for a more immersive exploration, providing deeper insights into the dynamics at play within the community and social media platforms. By integrating these diverse sources of data collection, your research aims to provide a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the complex relationship between social media and women's empowerment in the unique context of Ranchi Municipal Corporation.

Secondary data sources include academic literature, research reports, government publications, and online databases. By reviewing prior research in the field, I can gain insights into the existing knowledge and findings related to the subject of social media and women's empowerment. Government reports and publications can provide valuable statistical data and policy information specific to the Ranchi Municipal Corporation, further enhancing the depth of the study. Utilizing secondary data sources not only saves time but also allows for a broader perspective on the research topic. It enables me to compare and contrast findings, identify trends, and contextualize the primary data within a larger framework. Additionally, it ensures that the study is well-informed by the existing body of knowledge, contributing to the robustness and comprehensiveness of the research.

VIII. Analysis of Data

In my current study on the role of social media in women's empowerment within Ranchi Municipal Corporation, a significant aspect of data analysis involves statistical techniques. I will employ statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, to examine quantitative data gathered through surveys or structured interviews. Descriptive statistics will help provide an overview of key variables and summarize data patterns. Inferential statistics will allow for the assessment of relationships or associations between variables, thus aiding in the exploration of the research objectives. The use of these statistical methods will contribute to a more rigorous and structured examination of the quantitative aspects of the research, enhancing the depth and clarity of the findings.

IX. Significance of the Study

The present research carries profound significance on multiple fronts. In an age where social media has become an inseparable part of daily life, its influence on

women's empowerment is both pertinent and timely. By delving into the complex dynamics of how the digital realm can act as a catalyst for women's empowerment, this research addresses a pressing contemporary issue that affects the lives of countless women. Moreover, its specific focus on Ranchi Municipal Corporation brings the critical advantage of localized contextualization, enabling an in-depth exploration of the socio-cultural, economic, and political factors unique to this urban setting. This, in turn, provides insights that can be directly applied to not only Ranchi but also other urban areas facing similar challenges and opportunities.

The research's significance transcends academic boundaries, extending to the realm of policy and practical applications. Its findings are poised to enrich academic scholarship in sociology and gender studies, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between social media and women's empowerment. Additionally, the practical implications are profound, as the research has the potential to inform policymakers and stakeholders about the transformative power of social media in advancing women's empowerment. This, in turn, can lead to evidence-based policy decisions and the implementation of initiatives that can genuinely enhance economic opportunities, political participation, and the overall empowerment of women in Ranchi, thereby fostering positive change in the lives of women in the region. Thus, this Ph.D. research embodies its substantial significance by offering a comprehensive exploration of a topic that impacts not only academic knowledge but also the well-being and progress of women within the local community.

X. Its relevance to the present day problem and need to the society

The research on the role of social media in women's empowerment, with a specific focus on Ranchi Municipal Corporation, is highly relevant to the contemporary problems and societal needs of our times. In today's digital age, the digital divide, especially along gender lines, remains a pressing concern. The study's exploration of how social media can bridge this divide by empowering women is pivotal in addressing this modern-day challenge. Women's empowerment continues to be a paramount global issue, and social media offers a unique avenue for fostering economic independence, political engagement, and access to essential resources. Understanding the mechanisms through which social media can contribute to women's empowerment is not only timely but also essential in advancing gender equality and social progress. Furthermore, as policymakers and stakeholders seek

data-driven insights to formulate effective strategies, this research serve as a valuable resource. It provides evidence-based information for shaping policies and initiatives that leverage social media's potential to promote women's advancement, helping meet the immediate needs of society.

The research's localized approach, centered on Ranchi Municipal Corporation, recognizes the region's unique challenges and opportunities. By offering context-specific solutions and insights, it becomes a blueprint for addressing similar issues in other locales. Thus, this study responds to the contemporary demand for both localized and globally relevant solutions to promote women's empowerment, contributing to the knowledge expansion in the dynamic field of social media's impact on society.

XI. Contribution to the existing knowledge

The present research on the "Role of Social Media in Women Empowerment: A Sociological Study (With special reference to Ranchi Municipal Corporation)" makes a substantial contribution to existing knowledge in several crucial dimensions. By focusing specifically on Ranchi Municipal Corporation, the study provides a localized lens through which the existing understanding of the relationship between social media and women's empowerment can be enriched. This localization recognizes the unique socio cultural, economic, and political factors at play in Ranchi, which are often overlooked in broader studies. Consequently, the research's findings offer a more contextualized understanding that can serve as a blueprint for tailored strategies and interventions in similar localized settings. Moreover, the empirical evidence generated by this research, specific to the Ranchi context, bolsters the existing knowledge with concrete examples and insights. It brings to the forefront real-world instances of how social media influences women's empowerment, thereby contributing to the evidentiary base upon which future research and policy decisions can be founded. In an era where data-driven policymaking is pivotal, this research is not only academically significant but also policy-relevant. It offers practical implications for policymakers and stakeholders, providing guidance on how social media can be leveraged to advance women's economic independence, political participation, and overall empowerment. In this manner, the research serves as a bridge between academic scholarship and practical application, enhancing the relevance of existing knowledge to address contemporary societal needs. Lastly, by

exploring the intersection of sociology and technology in the context of women's empowerment, the research contributes to the sociological understanding of the digital age. It deepens our insights into how technology can both reinforce and challenge social norms and gender inequalities, thereby advancing the sociological knowledge base. In sum, this Ph.D. research enriches and expands the existing knowledge on the role of social media in women's empowerment, enhancing academic scholarship and providing valuable insights and directions for gender equality and women's empowerment efforts in Ranchi and beyond.

XII. Future Work

Future research in the domain of the "Role of Social Media in Women Empowerment: A Sociological Study (With special reference to Ranchi Municipal Corporation)" offers promising avenues for exploration and expansion. Longitudinal studies can provide insights into the evolving nature of women's empowerment through social media, tracking changes and sustainability over time. Comparative research, extending the study to other urban areas, can elucidate the role of local context in shaping empowerment dynamics. Further qualitative investigations into personal narratives and experiences can uncover the emotional and individual aspects of this phenomenon. Examining the effectiveness of empowerment interventions and programs on social media within Ranchi allows for an assessment of the impact of various initiatives, guiding best practices. Additionally, research on online harassment and safety concerns, as well as the intersection of factors like age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding empowerment. Exploring the differential impact of various social media platforms and features is essential, as is the evaluation of policies and regulations to protect women's rights in the digital space. Expanding the research globally and delving into ethical considerations for data collection and privacy can further advance the field, contributing to a richer understanding of how social media can empower women and addressing the challenges and opportunities in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

XIII. Tentative Chapatrization

1. **Introduction**
2. **Review of the Literature**
3. **Research Methodology**
4. **Role of Social Media in Women Empowerment**
5. **Data Interpretation and Analysis**
6. **Conclusion and Suggestions**

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Annexure

Schedules

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